



RESEARCH BRIEF

NEW AMERICAN INITIATIVE

ASSESSING AVAILABLE SERVICES IN CENTRAL OHIO FOR NEW AMERICANS



OBJECTIVES

- *To assess formal, informal, and volunteer services currently available to new Americans in Central Ohio.*
- *To identify specific gaps in service provision and utilization of services among new Americans.*
- *To identify differences in service access and utilization across new American populations.*
- *To provide specific program and policy-based recommendations based on the assessment.*

The City of Columbus New American Initiative

As immigrants are a growing part of the Central Ohio community, it is important to identify and educate the immigrant community on the services available to successfully integrate them into our community.

When immigrants relocate to a new location they face a myriad of hardships adjusting to their new surroundings. For example, they face employment challenges and lack of reliable social and educational services such as housing, health care, and quality schools.

In the spring of 2017, the Columbus City Council began discussing new laws that would prohibit arresting or denying public services to immigrants in the city based on their immigration status.

The role of Ohio State's College of Social Work

CSW will work to analyze what gaps exist in local social-service networks and how they could be filled to best help new Americans, including immigrants and refugees.

ASSESSING AVAILABLE SERVICES FOR NEW AMERICANS

Immigrants and refugees in Central Ohio

The foreign-born population in Ohio is growing. According to a study by Community Research Partners, Columbus ranked second in percentage of new foreign-born residents (those who came to the United States since 2000) compared to other major metropolitan areas.

- The Somali Community Access Network estimates that Central Ohio was home to more than 45,000 Somali Americans in 2009, making it the second largest Somali population in the United States after Minneapolis, MN.
- Currently, Central Ohio is home to approximately 23,427 Bhutanese refugees, the largest Bhutanese population in the United States.



Expected outcomes

Provide to the City of Columbus an in-depth report including:

- ◇ A service map highlighting accessibility and location of services
- ◇ Survey results on specific gaps in services and utilization of services among new Americans
- ◇ Information on informal services and volunteer organizations
- ◇ Information on barriers to accessing formal and informal services
- ◇ Recommendations for service improvements



ABOUT THE RESEARCHERS

Drs. Sharvari Karandikar, Arati Maleku, Cecilia Mengo, and Njeri Kagotho will conduct the needs assessment for the New Americans Initiative. **Dr. Karandikar** researches vulnerable populations including female sex workers and victims of sex trafficking on issues of gender-based violence, health, and mental health. **Dr. Maleku's** work focuses on the social determinants of immigrant well-being in the US. **Dr. Mengo's** research examines the persistent social problem of gender-based violence among marginalized and vulnerable women in the US and Sub-Saharan Africa. **Dr. Kagotho** explores the link between a family's wealth holdings and the physical and mental health of its members. In addition, she has also facilitated cross-cultural and cultural sensitivity trainings for communities and groups seeking to provide services to foreign born populations.

Contact information: karandikar.7@osu.edu

ABOUT THE RESEARCH

The Ohio State University College of Social Work has faculty expertise in a wide range of issues relating to immigrant and refugee populations. Our faculty work with many community partners and leaders to address these pressing issues.



L to R: Maleku, Mengo, Karandikar, Kagotho

CONTACT US

The Ohio State University
College of Social Work
Stillman Hall, 1947 College Rd.
Columbus, OH 43210-1162
csw.osu.edu/research
Phone: 614-292-9229



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